



Commission Memorandum

REPORT TO: Honorable Mayor and City Commission

FROM: Chuck Winn, Assistant City Manager

SUBJECT: Statistically Valid Survey Component of the 2012 Recreation/Aquatics Facility Feasibility Study.

MEETING DATE: April 2, 2012

AGENDA ITEM TYPE: Action

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the re-inclusion of the Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) in the 2012 Recreation/Aquatics Facility Feasibility Study.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: I move to approve the re-inclusion of the Statistically Valid Survey within the previously approved Recreation/Aquatics Facility Feasibility Study for a cost not to exceed \$10,000.

BACKGROUND: On January 23, 2012, the Commission authorized the City Manager to sign a contract with Comma-Q Architects to conduct a Recreation/Aquatics Facility Study for the City. During the deliberation, members of the Commission asked questions relating to the inclusion of the SVS within the larger study. At that time the Commission approved the study contingent upon the removal of the survey. Since the meeting, staff has moved ahead with the study as approved by the Commission.

Several of the Commission's questions remained unanswered after the meeting and on February 27, I sent the attached memorandum from Barker/Seacat/Rinker. This memo outlines the reasons the SVS was included in the original scope of work and what specific information the survey was intended to collect and add to the greater feasibility study.

Since the initial planning stages of the feasibility study, the YMCA has proactively participated and sought opportunities to partner with the City. To that effort they have raised private funds - approximately \$8,000 - to fund their participation. As we are waiting on the completion of the study to identify potential partners, it may be inappropriate for the City to presuppose those relationships and move in any one direction that might possibly exclude others. The YMCA understands this and had proposed using their funds to help develop and expand the scope of the SVS beyond the City's service area to include their service area. The removal of the SVS from the feasibility study has eliminated that avenue of participation. After continued discussion with the consultants and the YMCA, we believe the information anticipated to be gained through the SVS will add greatly to the validity and comprehensiveness of the feasibility study and ask the Commission for the authority to add it back into the authorized scope of work.

FISCAL EFFECTS: The cost of the SVS was \$10,000 and included the creation of the survey tool, development of the sampling database, conducting the survey itself, and the compilation of the results in coordination with the rest of the study. The approved contract was reduced by that amount when the survey was removed. It is anticipated that participation by the YMCA will reduce the City's price as the survey expenses will be shared. Actual costs have not been determined but we expect including the YMCA in this way will reduce the cost to city by approximately \$2,500.

ALTERNATIVES: Continue with the feasibility study without the survey.

Attachments:
Memo from Barker/Seacat/Rinker

Report compiled on: March 24, 2012

Chuck Winn
Assistant City Manager
City of Bozeman, Montana
cwinn@bozeman.net

February 17, 2012

RE: Statistically Valid Survey for Recreation / Aquatics Facilities Feasibility Study

Dear Chuck:

We understand that there has been some concern as to the usefulness and value of including a statistically valid survey in the proposed Recreation / Aquatics Facilities Feasibility Study scope of work.

I am writing to add to this discussion and provide additional rationale for your consideration.

Our primary purpose for utilizing a statistically valid survey is to gather information from a true cross section of Bozeman citizens. The community participation plan we have proposed includes several methods for citizen input in addition to the survey, including focus group meetings, community meetings and commission presentations. These gatherings are essential methods of outreach and input however we cannot guarantee that the participants will represent the entire community. A statistically valid survey captures the voices of those who don't normally participate in group meetings or cannot attend due to scheduling conflicts.

Timing is important. A statistically valid survey, undertaken early in the study provides the following benefits:

- Contributes to the programming process – determining, validating and prioritizing key program options.
- Gives verifiable data the City leaders can use to make decisions independent of specific user groups or special interest influences.
- Provides capital and operational funding tolerance data which helps shape the overall project scope and operational proforma.
- Validates empirical findings and opinions of City officials and the Design Professionals.
- Gives a 'defensible' framework to evaluate special interest group requests and data.
- Provides independent results. The survey questions will be developed with the City but the survey company ensures the objectivity and statistical validity of the data.
- Contributes statistically valid, community-wide market data to public / private partnerships discussions - improving potential alignment of public and private interests.

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With or without the survey, we will collect as much input as possible and we will refine this information with our past experience and industry best practices. The risk for the City and the process is that the outcomes are assailable. Also, the really hard decisions are always easier to make if leaders know where the majority of the citizens stand on issues. Is this project essential? What are the highest priorities? How much will you pay? What is an acceptable subsidy level? Since this could lead to a serious commitment of community resources, not having this information could impede leaders from making strong representative decisions.

Please let me know if we can be of further assistance on this issue.

Sincerely,



Craig Bouck